

**AUSTRALIAN  
STATISTICS  
ADVISORY  
COUNCIL**

**Annual Report  
1997–98**

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Produced by the Australian Bureau of Statistics

The Honourable Peter Costello, MP  
Treasurer of the Commonwealth of Australia

I have pleasure in submitting the Report of the Australian Statistics Advisory Council for the year ended 30 June 1998.

The Report outlines the work undertaken by the Council and is submitted to you for presentation to Parliament under section 24(2) of the *Australian Bureau of Statistics Act 1975*.

J.D.S. Macleod  
Chairman

6 August 1998 \*

\* *date approved for printing*

## **Australian Statistics Advisory Council**

### ***Mission***

*To ensure that, in keeping with Council's statutory charter, the advice furnished to the Minister and the Statistician in relation to the collection and dissemination of statistics has due regard to relative priorities, is objective, relevant, timely, constructive and practical, and that it is sensitive to the needs of both suppliers and users of statistical data.*

## FOREWORD

One of the most difficult tasks facing the Council each year is the review of the forward work program. This requires a balancing act to allocate the scarce resources to deserving new collections and improving existing collections. It also means rejecting lower priority claims on resources, and reducing some of the existing collections so that work can continue in new areas. Any such cutbacks will understandably draw protests from the affected constituency. One example, in 1997–98, was the quarterly survey of tourist accommodation. It was a tough decision given the size and importance of the tourist industry and its high growth rate. Nevertheless, ASAC agreed in the circumstances it was an appropriate reduction in the ABS's statistical program.

It has been another year of tight budgetary constraints. The Bureau has continued its record of productivity gains thereby releasing resources for new activities. Appendix 2 lists no fewer than 22 new publications released during the year. A striking feature is the health and service sector collections.

The Bureau experienced a year of considerable progress in 1997–98. Highlights were the release of the extensive output from the 1996 Census and the new wage cost index, and extensive preparatory work on a revised consumer price index. This output is only the tip of the iceberg because it does not adequately reflect the input of many people. The Bureau's team includes people with a strong theoretical backing plus those involved in the collection, collation and marketing activities.

In May 1998 the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Legal and Constitutional Affairs tabled the report of its Inquiry into the Treatment of Census Forms and recommended that name identified information contained in forms for future censuses be retained. Council considers that such a change would adversely affect data quality and would have serious consequences for the many uses of census data. The accuracy of the allocation of Commonwealth grants to the States and the determination of the number of seats to each State in the House of Representatives are two such areas which would be significantly affected. Council also considers the \$15 million cost of this proposal each five years would be more productively spent filling some high priority statistical gaps.

The House of Representatives Committee expressed some concerns about the independence and impartiality of this Council. Council does not accept this view. It denigrates and undervalues the many hours given generously by the widely representative Council members.

Council recommends that the Government reject all the recommendations of the Inquiry.

It has been a pleasure to continue to work with the highly professional staff of the Bureau. They consistently meet the important test of international excellence: indeed they are in the forefront of new developments. Australia is well served by this team.

J.D.S. Macleod  
Chairman



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*Note: In this report, after the first reference, the Australian Statistics Advisory Council is referred to as ASAC or the Council, and the Australian Bureau of Statistics as the ABS or the Bureau.*





## **Introduction**

This is the twenty second annual report of the Council, and is made in accordance with section 24(2) of the *Australian Bureau of Statistics Act 1975* which provides that: 'the Council shall, as soon as practicable after 30 June in each year, prepare and submit to the Minister, for presentation to the Parliament, a report relating to matters connected with the operation of this Act'.

This report of the Council operations during 1997–98 is presented under each of the broad functions set out in the Act.

## **Annual and longer term priorities and programs of work**

### ***ABS forward work program***

Council considered, as it does each year, the ABS forward work program in relation to longer term priorities for statistics.

At its July 1997 meeting, Council members spent considerable time identifying and discussing those social, economic and political issues that it believed would influence demand for ABS products in the medium term. These issues were grouped under nine broad headings and ranked by Council in order of importance. The medium term issues are listed in Appendix 1.

One of the main considerations underlying Council members' views of the medium term demands is the speed of change that is occurring in the structure of both the economy and society and which can be expected to continue in the future. To fulfil its role of assisting informed decision making, the ABS needs to be able to satisfy emerging statistical requirements at the same time as it continues its long standing collections.

Council devoted a significant part of its November 1997 and March 1998 meetings to consideration of the Bureau's forward work program for 1998–99 to 2000–2001. Council was pleased to note that the detailed strategy papers presented at the November 1997 meeting addressed many of the issues identified earlier by Council.

At its July 1997 meeting the direct impact on the ABS of the 1997 Commonwealth Budget was discussed. Council was advised that the further reduction in running costs of \$5.1 million per annum followed reductions in running costs of about 10 per cent over the previous two budgets. As it could not absorb this latest cut, several reductions to its work program were required. Council is particularly concerned that this is making it increasingly difficult for the ABS to continue to provide a high quality, objective and responsive statistical service, particularly with new demands arising from changes in the economy.

Council felt that the proposed work program cuts had a severe impact on statistics extensively used by State and Territory governments. Of particular concern was the discontinuation of the compilation and publication of

quarterly Gross State Product estimates. The deficiencies in quarterly state account estimates are understood but Council continues to emphasise that these statistics are widely used by State and Territory government agencies, and by private organisations. The ABS agreed to continue to make available the component information that it considered to be of acceptable quality. Of concern too was the impact on the general availability of regional statistics. Council acknowledged that the ABS's Regional Directors consulted regularly with State governments, and that the outcome of this consultative process was used as input into the ABS's work program.

Council was told the decision to reduce the quarterly census of tourist accommodation establishments was substantially due to the Budget constraints. Council agreed with this action noting that even with this reduction the tourism industry is getting a good service from the ABS. There was, however, widespread opposition by the tourism industry to the changes being made and representations were made to Council members. Some Council members, who had been lobbied by representatives from the tourism industry, expressed their disappointment with the lack of substantiation in submissions made to them about outcomes that result from the use of data from the survey. This issue again demonstrates how difficult it is to cut back existing statistical collections, especially for important industries such as tourism.

Notwithstanding the generally tight budgetary position, there were a number of significant developments taking place and 22 new statistical publications were issued during 1997–98 (see Appendix 2). Council welcomed continuing initiatives in the economic statistics program, including the upgrading of macroeconomic statistics, the recent implementation of revised international standards for balance of payments statistics and those proposed for the national accounts. The ongoing enhancement of prices and productivity measures will see some worthwhile new statistics in the next few years. The ABS will be working to further integrate its business statistics over the next few years, increasing the availability of information on service industries, and expanding the information technology statistics program. Work will continue on the development of environmental statistics. Council supported the ABS's plans to make greater use of administrative data sources as a means to extending the range of available regional statistics.

In the area of population and social statistics, Council is pleased that the program of social surveys will continue to provide benchmark data in the main areas of social concern and for some special population groups. Over the next few years, surveys will be conducted in the areas of housing; income and housing costs; household expenditure; disability, ageing and carers; crime and safety; and health. The household survey program is at full capacity and is unable to accommodate some important user demand. Preparations for the conduct of the 2001 Census of Population and Housing have commenced with community views being sought on its content. Council also provided its views. Efforts to improve the range and quality of statistics about Indigenous people using information from administrative records continue. The pioneering work by the ABS for the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) to derive performance indicators for a number of services, including education, health and welfare is another noteworthy development. Methods of constructing a Labour Cost Index by adding non-wage costs to the recently developed Wage

Cost Index are being investigated. Statistics on the labour force will be developed to ensure that they reflect the changes taking place in that sector. A household survey of employment arrangements and superannuation is being prepared.

At its July 1997 meeting, Council requested that the ABS provide it with information on changes to the work program during the past five years. In considering the ABS response, Council noted that in a period of generally unchanged resources, there had been a number of significant additions to the work program, and that these far outweighed any deletions. Extra work had been made possible by the discontinuation of lower priority activities, through user funding, and improvements in the productivity of the Bureau.

## **Improvement, extension and coordination of statistical services**

### ***Destruction of Census Forms***

In 1997–98 the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Legal and Constitutional Affairs conducted an Inquiry into the Treatment of Census Forms. Council provided a submission to the Inquiry and the Chair gave evidence at a public hearing. The ABS submission provided a comprehensive argument supporting the practice of destroying census forms and highlighting the privacy issues.

The Committee tabled its report in Parliament on 25 May 1998, recommending that name identified census forms be retained and released for access to researchers after 100 years. Council was very disappointed with the outcome of the Inquiry and with the Inquiry process.

Council has discussed the destruction of census forms on a number of occasions in the past, declaring its support for a continuation of the current policy frequently in its annual reports. Again in 1997–98 Council reaffirmed its support for the policy of form destruction and decided to prepare a submission to that effect for the Standing Committee Inquiry.

Council is concerned that a change to the policy on census forms destruction, which would be without major precedent, will adversely affect the quality of census data and, most importantly, adversely affect the reliability of State/Territory population estimates. This would have serious ramifications for the many users of census data who rely on the Census data for their planning and delivery of services. Most importantly, it would also have serious implications for the accuracy of allocations of Commonwealth grants to the States/Territories, and for the determination of the number of seats for each State/Territory in the House of Representatives (which raises Constitutional concerns).

Council considers that no convincing evidence of substantial public benefit from keeping the forms was provided to the Inquiry. Certainly the perceived

benefits to genealogists, and family and social historians are far outweighed by the quality benefits that accrue from the continued destruction of forms.

Council is convinced that the additional costs of retaining census forms, about \$15 million each five years, would be more productively spent on many other areas of statistics, and recommended that the Inquiry consider this cost benefit trade off.

Council recommends that the Government reject all the recommendations made in the Standing Committee's Report.

### **13th Series CPI Review**

Consistent with international practice, the Consumer Price Index is reviewed at about 5 yearly intervals. Council's views were sought on the ABS strategy for the 13th review of the Consumer Price Index (CPI), and it considered a draft of an information paper, *Issues to be Considered During the 13th Series Review of the Australian Consumer Price Index*, which subsequently formed the major part of the worthwhile user consultation phase of the review. Council discussions focused mainly on the principal purpose of the CPI. The view that the acquisitions approach provides a better measure of general inflation which reflects actual prices for goods and services paid by consumers was discussed. Council members acknowledged that the cost of living aspects of the CPI were becoming less important. Furthermore, mortgage interest rates are not relevant for a large proportion of social security beneficiaries. For many reasons there has been a decline in the importance of the CPI for income adjustment purposes. Council also considered the alternative view that the principal purpose of the CPI is to provide information on changes in the cost of living. Council members concluded that there is no one index which will satisfy the competing demands for measures of living costs and of general price inflation.

Other issues considered by Council were an increase in the population coverage of the CPI to all households in the capital cities; the inclusion of a ninth major group, *Financial charges*, in the CPI; and the inclusion of gambling. Council supported changes to the analytical series of the Index. Council also supported work on spatial indexes, but as a lower priority.

### **COAG Performance Indicators**

In 1993 the Council of Australian Governments commissioned a Review of Government Service Provision in the States and Territories with a view to promoting comparative performance monitoring. Working groups were established and given responsibility for developing an appropriate framework of performance indicators for the collection of data within the indicator framework which has been developed. As the national statistical agency, the ABS has been involved with the working groups from the beginning and has provided a substantial range of data to many areas of the Review. Council discussed the Review in 1997, when it expressed considerable interest in strengthening ABS involvement. Subsequently, additional funds were made

available through the ABS planning process to enable the Bureau to increase its services to the Review; to position itself to direct further development of the statistical frameworks under the Review; and to promote coordination of statistical activity across the various areas of government service provision.

Council acknowledged that the ABS has a significant role in the Review, and through its involvement, it is enhancing its role in standards development and data quality assurance. By examining the possibility of making alterations to existing statistics to better meet the needs of the Review, the quality and range of data presented in the Review can be expected to improve in the future.

Council also considered that the development of good performance indicators was imperative for the effective and efficient delivery of outcomes for people, and to obtain better value for money in delivering these outcomes. Council commended the ABS on the work that it had done to date.

### ***Service Sector and Information Technology Statistics***

The Council has been emphasising the need for greater priority in service sector collections for many years.

The ABS has collected data on information technology since the late 1980s and in light of its importance to all facets of Australian life, and the emphasis accorded it by the Australian Government, the ABS plans to extend its program in this area. The earlier ABS collections had focused mainly on the supply side of information technology goods and services, but recent surveys had also gathered information on the demand side. The program now includes comprehensive surveys in alternate years covering both demand and supply. For the 1997–98 reference year, the ABS will conduct surveys of the use of technology by the business, government and household sectors. These surveys will also cover transactions on multimedia products and the use of online services, including electronic commerce. These topics have become very important in recent times. A survey of the telecommunications industry as it existed before deregulation has been conducted. This will produce a detailed benchmark for measuring changes in the industry as a result of deregulation.

Council acknowledged that there were no national or international frameworks to guide the ABS in this field of statistics and commended the Bureau on its efforts to define and collect information technology statistics. Council was interested to hear that, due to international demand for an increase in the type amount of information technology data, the OECD had set up an experts panel to advise on statistical standards, definitions and conventions which ought to apply in this field of statistics. The ABS has been closely involved in the panel's activities, and is expected to take a leading role in future developments.

Council discussions covered such topics as the need for industry and State based data; the degree of information technology penetration into businesses, and how business connects to value added networks; and the take up rate of technology by industry and by households. The latter was considered important because government services will be increasingly provided

electronically. From a welfare aspect, Council considered it also important to have data available about how technology is being used, and about barriers to its take up such as affordability and lack of physical access.

## **Other Matters**

### ***ABS Information Dissemination Activities***

Council has been briefed on these activities on a regular basis. Council believes that the switch to electronic dissemination of data is an important issue for the Bureau. The information dissemination activities of the ABS cover dissemination of information, provision of library services, client servicing, and marketing and public relations. These activities play a very important role in the achievement of the ABS objective of having official statistics, both ABS and non-ABS, used widely in decision making, research and discussion within governments and the community. It does this through its marketing and client servicing activities, and by the provision of services relating to the development, production, promotion, and delivery of ABS information products and services. It also seeks to maintain high levels of provider and community support through its public relations activities.

To meet its public good obligations, the ABS must ensure that basic statistics are both readily available and affordable. Its Library Extension Program plays an important role in servicing this requirement. Over 500 libraries across Australia are involved in the program, and they receive, at no cost, an extensive range of ABS publications and some electronic services. The ABS Telephone Inquiry Service and the ABS World Wide Web Site also provide basic statistics free of charge.

Council was informed that the main areas of development activity will include improvements to the quality of ABS publications and products; improving the ABS's client focus, which will include the introduction of a client service charter; and the achievement of business goals. The latter has become increasingly important with the 1997 Commonwealth Budget requirement that the ABS raise an additional \$2 million net revenue per annum from the sales of products and services to offset a reduction in budget funding.

### ***1996 Census of Population and Housing***

Council was provided with regular briefings on the progress of the release of results from the 1996 Census. In many respects the 1996 Census has been the most successful to date with processing being completed four weeks ahead of schedule and most products and services being released ahead of the planned release schedule, and well ahead of previous census timetables. The first release of data in July 1997 also showed an improvement in the accuracy of ABS estimates of the State/Territory populations between censuses.



Council believes the high standard of Australian censuses, and the continuous improvement focus, reflect great credit on all concerned.

### ***ABS Statistical Centres***

Council was provided with information papers about three ABS statistical centres within the ABS: National Centre for Crime and Justice Statistics, National Centre for Culture and Recreation Statistics and National Centre for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Statistics. These provide an integrated information service for users and coordinate national statistics in their fields. A major factor contributing to the effectiveness of each Centre was the close cooperation that exists between the relevant Commonwealth and State agencies and the ABS. The cooperation has, for example, enabled the ABS to draw extensively on administrative data sources and to play a leading role in developing statistical standards.

#### ***National Centre for Crime and Justice Statistics***

A progress report on the development of national crime and justice statistics was presented in 1995 when there were three separate statistical units within the ABS: crime, courts and corrections. Council was pleased to see that the National Centre, formed from these units, is providing enhanced coordination and analytical capacity. The role of the Centre is to provide an information service to criminal justice agencies, research and policy organisations, academic criminologists and members of the public. This work includes the provision of statistical information, training of data providers, advice on applicable standards, and quality control procedures.

The creation of the Centre, which is located in Melbourne, has produced for the first time crime and justice statistics from administrative records of government on a nationally comparable basis. It also assists in important developments, such as the COAG Review of Government Service Provision and the design of new national standards for drug statistics and strategic intelligence.

#### ***National Centre for Culture and Recreation Statistics***

The National Centre for Culture and Recreation Statistics is located in Adelaide and was established in 1991. The focus on cultural statistics arose from requests from the Cultural Ministers Council for the ABS to improve the quality and range of cultural statistics. Through the ABS's involvement with the Recreation and Sports Industry Statistics Group, an additional focus on sport and recreation has been developed. Council noted current policy issues for both the arts and recreation in Australia involve economic development of areas that show the most potential for job creation and export growth. The application of technology in these areas, and the protection of the creators'

work (through copyright) of cultural/recreational products are also important policy issues.

This Centre has, as its main responsibility, the coordination of national statistical activity in the fields of culture and recreation. The subject matter is broad, covering a wide spectrum from heritage, libraries, performing arts, film, television, festivals to sport and recreation. Council noted that the data are extracted from a variety of sources, including a considerable number of ABS population, labour and social collections.

#### *National Centre for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders Statistics*

Council has a strong interest in Indigenous statistics, and was pleased to note that the 1990s have seen a considerable increase in their availability. Three particular achievements have been the first experimental estimates of the size and composition of Australia's Indigenous population, the conduct of the specially designed and targeted national omnibus social survey of Australia's Indigenous people in 1994 and the production of the first comprehensive report on *The Health and Welfare of Australia's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples* jointly with the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare.

The National Centre for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Statistics, located in Darwin, plays an important role in the coordination, production and dissemination of statistics about Australia's Indigenous people. The quality of these statistics is of major concern to the Centre because of the increasing demands made by governments to assist in the development of policies to address social and economic issues, and to enable them to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of their programs. Two current important issues for the Centre are statistical information on the health of the Indigenous population, and its involvement in the development of a national plan requested by the Australian Health Ministers' Advisory Council to improve all Indigenous health data. The ABS has also recently funded a program to improve the quality of Indigenous statistics across all major administrative collections.



## **APPENDIX 1**

### **Broad medium term issues facing the ABS**

- Changing nature of jobs, dynamics of the labour market, quality of jobs, labour mobility.
- Service industries statistics, including trade in services, performance/productivity indicators, quantity of outputs.
- Taxation, including incidence of tax, and data to inform the tax reform debate.
- Broader measures of economic well-being.
- Focus on measuring outcomes of policy delivery (for example, health, education, employment policies).
- Issues of an ageing population.
- Indigenous statistics.
- Interstate migration statistics.
- Electronic dissemination and better access to ABS data.

## **APPENDIX 2**

### **New publications issued in 1997–98**

<b>Catalogue No.</b>	<b>Title</b>
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4143.0	Business of Music, Australia
4156.0	Sport and Recreation: A Statistical Overview, Australia
4189.0	National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Survey: Law and Justice Issues
4228.0	Aspects of Literacy: Assessed Skill Levels, Australia
4326.0	Mental Health and Wellbeing: Profile of Adults, Australia
4334.0	National Health Survey: Private Health Insurance, Australia
4368.0	National Health Survey: Summary Results, Australian States and Territories
4398.0	Causes of Infant and Child Deaths, Australia
4399.0	National Health Survey: SF36 Population Norms, Australia
4442.0	Family Characteristics, Australia
4608.0	Mineral Account, Australia
4705.0	Population Distribution, Indigenous Australians
4802.0	National Nutrition Survey: Selected Highlights, Australia
6345.0	Wage Cost Index, Australia
8142.0	Business Operations and Industry Performance, Australia, Preliminary
8146.0	Household Use of Information Technology, Australia
8147.0	Use of the Internet by Householders, Australia
8639.0	Interest Groups, Australia
8693.0	Consultant Engineering Services, Australia
8694.0	Community Services, Australia, Preliminary
8695.0	Accommodation Industry, Australia
8696.0	Community Services, Australia

Note: Excludes 1996 Census of Population and Housing publications and a number of new State specific publications.

## APPENDIX 3

### THE AUSTRALIAN STATISTICS ADVISORY COUNCIL

The Australian Statistics Advisory Council was established by the *Australian Bureau of Statistics Act 1975*.

This is the twenty second annual report of the Council, and is made in accordance with section 24(2) of the Act which provides that: 'the Council shall, as soon as practicable after 30 June in each year, prepare and submit to the Minister, for presentation to the Parliament, a report relating to matters connected with the operation of this Act'.

Under section 18(1) of the *Australian Bureau of Statistics Act 1975* the Council is to advise the Minister and the Australian Statistician on:

- (a) *the improvement, extension and co-ordination of statistical services provided for public purposes in Australia;*
- (b) *annual and longer term priorities and programs of work that should be adopted in relation to major aspects of the provision of those statistical services; and*
- (c) *any other matters relating generally to those statistical services.*

The Act enables the Minister or the Australian Statistician to seek the advice of the Council on these matters. The Council also offers advice on these matters to the Minister or the Australian Statistician when it considers it appropriate to do so.

The Act provides that the Council shall consist of a part-time Chairman, the Australian Statistician (ex officio), and between ten and twenty-two part-time members, including one nominee of each State Premier and the Chief Ministers of the two Territories. The Chairman and members are appointed by the responsible Minister – currently the Treasurer – for periods of five years and up to three years respectively, and are eligible for reappointment.

The Chairman receives an annual fee, set by the Remuneration Tribunal, and members are reimbursed their travel costs, where applicable. Apart from the Chairman, no members receive remuneration for serving on the Council. Direct expenditure on ASAC during 1997–98 was \$75,500. These costs are met from the Executive component of the ABS budget allocation.

Secretariat services for ASAC are provided by the Australian Bureau of Statistics. The office of ASAC Secretary is held by the Assistant Statistician of the ABS Policy Secretariat Branch. Secretariat support, mainly involving organising and recording of meetings, administering membership and the preparation of Council's annual report is provided by officers of the Policy Secretariat Branch. The cost of these services, which is included in the Branch's normal running costs, was estimated to be \$52,900 during 1997–98. Financial statements for the ABS are included in the ABS Annual Report.

In addition, ABS officers are involved in the preparation of many of the ASAC agenda papers.

## APPENDIX 4

### MEMBERSHIP OF COUNCIL, 30 JUNE 1998

		<i>Date first appointed</i>
Mr John Macleod	Chairman	17.3.83
Mr Bill McLennan, AM	Australian Statistician (ex officio)	3.4.95
Ms Christine Bierbaum	Director, Intergovernment Relations Department of the Premier and Cabinet South Australia	1.12.97
Mr Richard Cox	Director Economic Research and Forecasting New South Wales Treasury	1.5.97
Mr Alan Cullen	Executive Chairman Thinkbank Pty Ltd	1.5.97
Mr Clem Doherty	Board Member Australian Coalition of Service Industries	1.5.97
Prof. Meredith Edwards, AM	Deputy Vice-Chancellor University of Canberra	1.3.88(a)
Mrs Bridget Faye	Company Director	1.5.97
Dr David Filby	Executive Director South Australian Health Commission	1.4.98
Mr Tim Harcourt	Research Officer Australian Council of Trade Unions	3.11.97
Dr Jeff Harmer	Managing Director Health Insurance Commission	3.11.97
Ms Betty Hounslow	Director Australian Council of Social Service	1.5.97
Dr Steven Kates	Chief Economist Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry	1.9.91

## MEMBERSHIP OF COUNCIL, 30 JUNE 1998 — continued

Mr Mark Kerslake	Acting Deputy Secretary Economic and Financial Policy Division Department of Treasury and Finance Tasmania	1.4.98
Prof. Max Neutze, AO	Research School of Social Sciences, Australian National University	4.6.86
Mr Gary Potts	Deputy Secretary Department of the Treasury	1.11.93
Mr John Robertson	Director, Economic Management Chief Minister's Department Australian Capital Territory	1.12.97
Dr Ron Sandland	Chief CSIRO Mathematical and Information Sciences	1.10.94
Mr David Smith	Government Statistician Queensland	1.6.89
Mr Tony Stubbin	Director, Economic Analysis Economic Services Division Northern Territory Treasury	3.2.97

(a) Did not serve on Council between April 1990 and March 1995.

## **APPENDIX 5**

### **CHANGES IN MEMBERSHIP SINCE 30 JUNE 1997**

July 1997	Mr Tim Spencer resigned.
November 1997	Ms Christine Charles resigned. Mr Tim Harcourt appointed. Dr Jeff Harmer appointed.
December 1997	Ms Christine Bierbaum appointed. Mr John Robertson appointed.
January 1998	Mr Glenn Appleyard resigned.
March 1998	Dr Peter Shergold resigned.
April 1998	Dr David Filby appointed. Mr Mark Kerslake appointed. Ms Anne Nolan resigned. Professor Judith Sloan resigned. Mr Richard Whitelaw died after a long illness.

Note: Dr Judith Yates and Professor Peter Karmel completed their membership terms on 30 April 1997 and 30 June 1997 respectively.

## APPENDIX 6

### MEETINGS OF COUNCIL 1997–98

9 July 1997

26–27 November 1997

25 March 1998

### ATTENDANCE AT MEETINGS

		<i>Meetings Attended</i>
<b>Chairman</b>	Mr John Macleod	3
<b>Australian Statistician</b>	Mr Bill McLennan, AM	3
<b>State/Territory Representatives</b>		
New South Wales	Mr Richard Cox	3
Victoria	Mr Richard Whitelaw (b)	1
	Mr Vin Martin (a)	2
Queensland	Mr David Smith	3
Western Australia	Ms Anne Nolan (b)	1
	Ms Hazel Kural (a)	1
	Mr Tim Marney (a)	1
South Australia	Ms Christine Charles (b)	1
	Ms Christine Bierbaum (b)	2
Tasmania	Mr Glenn Appleyard (b)	1
	Mr Stuart James (a)	1
	Mr Mark Kerslake (b)	1
Northern Territory	Mr Tony Stubbin	2
Australian Capital Territory	Mr Roger Broughton (a)	1
	Mr John Robertson (b)	2

## ATTENDANCE AT MEETINGS — continued

### Other members

Mr Mike Callaghan (a)	1
Mr Alan Cullen	2
Mr Clem Doherty	3
Prof. Meredith Edwards, AM	1
Mrs Bridget Faye	2
Dr David Filby (b)	1
Mr Tim Harcourt (b)	2
Dr Jeff Harmer (b)	1
Ms Betty Hounslow	3
Prof. Peter Karmel, AC, CBE (b)	1
Dr Steven Kates	3
Prof. Max Neutze, AO	3
Mr Gary Potts	2
Dr Ron Sandland	3
Dr Peter Shergold, AM (b)	1
Prof. Judith Sloan (b)	2
Dr Judith Yates (b)	1

(a) proxy

(b) member for part year only — see Appendix 5 for details of changes in membership since 30 June 1997.



## **APPENDIX 7**

### **MEMBERS' PARTICIPATION IN ABS ACTIVITIES**

<b>Economic Statistics User Group</b>	Mr Richard Cox Dr Steven Kates
<b>Housing Statistics User Group</b>	Dr Judy Yates
<b>Labour Statistics Advisory Group</b>	Dr Steven Kates Mr Tim Harcourt
<b>Census Evaluation Steering Group</b>	Dr Judy Yates
<b>CPI Review Advisory Group</b>	Prof. Max Neutze, AO Dr Steven Kates Mr Tim Harcourt

## **APPENDIX 8**

### **FREEDOM OF INFORMATION STATEMENT**

Below is a statement, as required by section 8 of the *Freedom of Information Act 1982*, about the structure of ASAC and how members of the public can obtain access to information held by it.

#### **Establishment, organisation and functions**

See The Australian Statistics Advisory Council (page 11).

#### **Powers**

As an advisory body, ASAC has no decision-making or other powers directly affecting members of the public. It does not administer any enactments or schemes.

#### **Arrangements for outside participation**

ASAC members are appointed by the Minister responsible for the ABS so that a broad range of views and interests is reflected in the advice that it offers to the Minister and the Statistician. Membership details are given on pages 12–17.

Persons or bodies outside the Commonwealth administration may participate in the Council's policy formulation by making representations to the Minister or the Chairman on matters of concern to them.

#### **Categories of documents**

The ASAC annual report, which is tabled in Parliament, is available from all ABS offices. Files are maintained which contain documents relating to the administration of the Council, papers discussed at Council meetings, summary records of proceedings of meetings and correspondence relating to the activities of the Council.

#### **FOI procedures and initial contact points**

All inquiries concerning access to documents, including inquiries under the *Freedom of Information Act 1982*, may be directed on weekdays, between 8.30am and 4.30pm, to the Secretary, Australian Statistics Advisory Council, c/- Australian Bureau of Statistics, Cameron Offices, Belconnen, ACT 2617 — telephone (02) 6252 5760.